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# THE E-TOURISM BEYOND COVID-19: A CALL FOR TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

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**Abstract:** *The upsurge of Covid-19 changed lifestyles and hit almost every sector. The tourism sector is one of the most affected sectors due to social distancing, ban on crowding, restrictions to visit public places, and grounded airplanes. The study proposed a shift to e-tourism until the Covid-19 get fully curbed. Therefore, this study aims to focus on the tourist's experiences in Thailand during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study provides insight with the support of literature to help practitioners and researchers to understand, manage, and improve the tourism industry and induce technological transformation to curb the impact of the outbreak. The paper proposes a way to turn Covid-19 into a transformational opportunity. The study used Smart PLS software for analysis and data was collected from the tourist who had intentions to visit Thailand and the ones already in Thailand. The study fills the gap of the call for a transformation of e-tourism and explains the impact of the pandemic on the industry. The study presents the theoretical and practical implications to promote the tourism industry and the transformation of the technology in the Covid-19 pandemic.*

**Keywords:** *Visual Tourism; Covid-19; Tourism Site; E-Tourism; Technological Transformation*

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## INTRODUCTION

The government of China reported to World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019, about Covid-19, and WHO declared it a global pandemic on March 11, 2020 (WHO 2020). In a few months, the Covid-19 virus was declared a global disaster with a profound influence on economic, political, and social systems (Gretzel *et al.* 2020).

When negative effects of Covid-19 upsurge then the governments put bans at the global, regional, and national levels, imposed travel restrictions, stay home orders, mandatory quarantine, and other business-related restrictions at multiple levels of market and organizations (Gössling, Scott, and Hall 2020). It resulted in ceased traveling, tourism, aviation sector, and the hospitality industry related business had to shut down their operations. Although a few countries gradually opened their borders still the conditions are generally uncertain due to viral transmissions, lack of medical treatments, and effective vaccinations.

This pandemic hit the tourism sector all over the world, but ASEAN countries got harder hit as they are mainly dependent on tourism. Among the ASEAN countries, Thailand is the second-largest economy and top tourist destination. As per the Thai government, the reported figure of tourists in Thailand is 4.1 million, it is increased 8% to 38.3 million from 2018 to 2019, which generated revenue by THB3000 billion, its highest fourth-ranked in World (Bloomberg Businessweek 2019). After that situation gone worse due to the upsurge of Covid-19. The Covid-19 impacted the global economy and affected the tourism industry in Thailand. It is mentioned by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that Thailand's economy is shrinking by 6.7% in the year 2020 (UDN 2020). The raise of COVID-19 caused complex problems than any other outbreak in modern history from a social and economic perspective (Bhimraj *et al.* 2020). Now it is unsure how tourists would respond and recuperate from the disasters and how to share the travel, tourism, and social events. Therefore, the study is conducted and the finding of the study would bring answers to these major challenges for the tourism industry (Gössling *et al.* 2020; Hall *et al.* 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles 2020; Jamal and Budke 2020).

The review of the literature revealed that the technological role got a sudden boost as social distancing orders shifted everyone to digital platforms. The emergence of the internet in the business and proliferation of information technology become a significant source of information for tourists during the pandemic (Verciner en Klein 1999). Information technology is increasingly involved in tourism and providing solutions to related business as it is important to involve the tourism-related business such as hotels and transport for the success of the tourism industry (Benckendorf *et al.* 2019; Verthner *et al.* 2015; Xiang 2018). During the pandemic, information technology facilitated the tourists to curb the problems that could arise in daily lives, with their work, travel, recreational activities, and business. Technology has played an important role to ease tourism and facilitating the tourists (Hall *et al.* 2017). With the help of technology, the global transmission issues such as tourist inspections, cases, and contact assessments, online learning are also mitigated. Moreover, an issue of catastrophe due to the increased public interest was also identified. It includes fangled digital gap, vulnerabilities, privacy, misinformation, moral and ethical concerns caused serious points to consider by all electronic travel series (Werthner *et al.* 2015). However, e-tourism

showed up as a research initiative that enhances the knowledge and thinking skills and provides information about the technological advancement about the key issues of tourists (Xiang *et al.* 2021). After the introduction of information technology in tourism, the e-tourism segment is coming up with new trends that are emerging of brands in real and with a surprising long-term outlook of change through integration of technology. Moreover, it is found that e tourism brought challenging tasks and thrilling opportunities from the perspective of the technological revolution.

As Covid-19 changed society and trends which provided a boost to the tourism industry. Moreover, it offers the opportunity and the responsibility to think critically about e-tourism and the capacity to introduce technological transformations. Based on the discussion, the first objective of this study is to investigate the impact of the usefulness of visual tourism which is proposed to have a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. The second objective of the study is to examine the ease of visual tourism which is proposed to have a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. The third objective of the study is to inspect the impact of e-tourism which is proposed to have a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. Furthermore, e-tourism proposed to mediate between usefulness and ease of the visual tourism and tendency to visit the actual tourism site. This study provides inputs in tourism literature and highlights the role of information technology in tourism. Mankind is unsure about the ending time of Covid-19; however, it calls to researchers and practitioners to look for challenges, risks, opportunities, and how e-tourism could be shaped.

## THE LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Tendency to Visit the Tourism Place*

The perception of travelers is a crucial factor to promote any tourist place because they impact the revisit intentions of fellow tourists (Ahmed 1991), utilization of merchandise and enterprises while on vacation, and choosing to return (Stevens 1992). Most tourists have encounters with other objections, and their discernments are affected by comparisons among amenities, attractions, and services guidelines (Laws 1995). The empirical and theoretical articles concerning client satisfaction (CS) and administration quality, both their tendency and the most effective method to gauge them, proliferate inside the new advertising literature (Hui, Wan, and Ho 2007). Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), as a section of online advertising administrations, contribute extensive sums of time and cash in the advancement of sites (Park, Gretzel, and Sirakaya-Turk 2007). Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) give sightseers different travel data like pictures of touring and social or recorded attractions to provoke them to travel the intention by creating easy-to-use sites (Raza *et*

*al.* 2020). The information given by DMOs is extensively solid and trustful as compared to the User Generated Content (UGC) that is given with a mixture of beginner, semi-proficient, what are more, proficient substances. It is readily controlled or manhandled (Ayeh, Au, and Law 2013). The way that the authority site was made by the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) had more than 100 million guests in 2013. It means that the objective site fills in as a real data hotspot for the possible vacationers to think about Korea as a traveler location and demonstrates that Korea has been effectively situated as an understanding of the travel industry location. As the Internet has become effectively available media, the potential vacationers will, in general, decide their movement location by the data or pictures of the publicizing site (Wang *et al.* 2009). Information, specifically, has assumed a part of forming objective pictures (Chung *et al.* 2015). Mridula (2009) found that sightseers are not just a recipient of objective picture data, yet effectively build and offer their pictures through the Internet. Extensively, the picture references convictions and impressions emerging from information handling, which brings about an inside acknowledged psychological build of an item (Choi, Lehto, and O'Leary 2007).

As per Voorveld *et al.* (2012), customers' behavioral reactions to online brands are impacted with three variables including the qualities of the brand's website, clients' mental states while exploring the website, and clients' inward reactions to the website. Few studies have been investigated the utilization of these three elements with online brand encounters through sites.

To start with, Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013) and Lee *et al.* (2014) the experience of online brand depend on clients' evaluations of brand qualities on the website (its intelligence, quantity of data, and convenience). Notwithstanding, this consideration prompts estimation clashes with other grounded develops in the promoting field, like online quality assistance, since things utilized by Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013) and Lee and Jeong (2014) are unclear from those who used to quantify the nature of the web services (Hornig *et al.* 2012). In this manner, changes are expected to separate the online brand insight and online services quality.

Second, factors like association, seen intelligence, and stream status are utilized to assess clients' mental states while exploring brands' sites. The degree of site association, which is resolved depends on the interest that appeared in a brand, directly impacts clients' behavioral reactions to the site and the brand (Jimenez-Barreto *et al.* 2019). An undeniable degree of saw intelligence, characterized as the mental condition of a webpage client during online communication, is connected to a good assessment of the site and brand (Li, Wu, and Cai 2008). Stream alludes to the psychological condition of a client who is completely drenched in exploring the site (Novak, Hoffman, and Yung 2000). A few examinations have demonstrated an immediate connection between a client's stream state and fulfillment with online buys (Rose *et al.* 2012).

Third, clients' inward reactions to brands' sites have been utilized to characterize the online brand insight. A few examinations (Bleier, De Keyser, and Verleye 2018) adjusted work to the online area to assess and approve the accompanying on the experience of online brand measurements: tangible (online brand-related boosts that seen through the facilities), conduct (substantial encounters and engine activities got with the contact of an online brand), scholarly/psychological (contemplations and innovative incitements evoked by the online brand), and full of feeling (the subject's feelings and sentiments concerning the online brand). Therefore, these examinations presumed that, inside the perspective of brand sites, an ideal online brand experience would influence clients' trust and fulfillment with the brand and encourage buy aims (Bleier, De Keyser, and Verleye 2018).

Inside the traveler destinations context, just (Jimenez-Barreto *et al.* 2019) embraced the fourth portion of brand insight measurements (tangible and scholarly) created by Brakus *et al.* (2009) to investigate official destinations sites capacity to cultivate clients' expectations to constantly visit and suggest the objective. By and by, past investigations receiving an alternate hypothetical point of view (Zhang, Wu, and Buhalis 2018) estimated the brand experience worldview to break down online vacationer encounters on official destinations sites. In the first place, following the tactile and scholarly measurements of the brand insight, W. Lee and Gretzel (2012) tracked down that the visual-text based tangible boosts of an authority destination site can help animate clients' psychological cycles, which may advance into positive reactions to the site and destination. Second, following Brakus *et al.* (2009) meaning of the emotional brand insight, Zhang *et al.* (2018) proposed estimation of passionate experience suggested by a destination, while clients explore the destination's site and web-based media. For this situation, the passionate destination experience comprises of clients' apparent delight and energy identified with interfacing with a destination on the web (Raza, Salleh, and Shaari 2019).

Comparatively, for the Spanish and North American customers, the famous online media stages (by many clients) are Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook (IAB 2017; Statista 2018). Hence, the scientists thought of it as proper to utilize online visual situations that contain these three web-based media stages just as the authority destination site for photograph elicitation. The genuine pictures introduced were utilized instead of the online route, as this methodology permitted the analysts to control the boosts shown to the members (Jimenez-Barreto *et al.* 2019).

### *The Usefulness of the Visual Tourism*

The augmented reality (AR) is a representation method that combines different sight and sound data with a genuine view (Kounavis, Kasimati, and Zamani 2012). Most augmented reality frameworks fortify the contiguity of reality by superimposing virtual



data appropriate to actual items and spaces (Azuma, Billinghurst, and Klinker 2011). Subsequently, the augmented reality supports vision about the world through overlaying the virtual items. According to this present reality, it appears that the virtual object is important for the genuine climate in the client's perspective (Steven, Castley, and Buckley 2013). Later improvements in portable registering, remote, and PC illustrations innovations have considered the quick development of augmented reality applications on cell phones (Yovcheva, Buhalis, and Gatzidis 2012).

In light of these capacities, augmented reality uses spatiotemporal contiguity that shows up in regions like instruction, clinical science, and engineering (Chung, Han, and Joun 2015). The augmented reality is especially identified with the travel industry area since it is an instrument for upgrading clients' encounters (Jung, Chung, and Leue 2015). For instance, augmented reality innovations are acquiring incredible significance in the virtual reconstructing of verifiable landmarks, making different custodians, archeologists or history specialists replicate nearby verifiable encounters (Han, Jung, and Gibson 2013). So that, the application of Google Maps can determine the specific area and name. Likewise, augmented reality innovation has been applied in assorted cell phones for use in independent visits including grounds route framework (Chou and ChanLin 2012). In the travel industry, the use of augmented reality is viable and helps travelers to better comprehend their present climate. Moreover, the fundamental benefit is that sightseers can see flimsy information according to their interest that is set in a situation (Yovcheva, Buhalis, and Gatzidis 2012).

According to these applications, a few examinations explore the augmented reality also in the situation of the travel industry (Han *et al.* 2013; Kounavis *et al.* 2012). In a study, Kounavis (2012) clarified an intelligent representation framework dependent on augmented reality innovation in the context of the travel industry and highlighted that augmented reality outwardly reinforces the genuine world. Yovcheva *et al.* (2012) introduced an outline of cell phone augmented reality for the travel industry and focused on plan angles like the interface, presentations, and perceptions. Yovcheva *et al.* (2013) recognized the augmented reality is the mode for traveler knowledge and built the hypothetical commitments to differentiating highlights to increased travel industry encounters regarding augmented reality use. As per Casella and Coelho (2013), the augmented reality versatile applications are helpful innovations to understand the social legacy of the travel industry. In another study, Han *et al.* (2013) attempted to comprehend metropolitan legacy in the travel industry too. Based on the arguments, following hypothesis proposed.

**H1:** The usefulness of visual tourism has a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site.

### *Ease of Using the Visual Tourism*

The augmented reality usage is yet another problem in a travel industrial situation since augmented reality has not culminated (Han *et al.* 2013). The studies that looked into augmented reality in the travel business area occasionally considered why people use augmented reality or the effects of its use on traveler objections. Most of the studies identified with its acknowledgment considered the person (individual), innovation explicit (improvement), and situational factors that are significant in tolerating innovation (Liu, Tzeng, and Lee 2012).

The augmented reality acknowledgment at vacationer locations can be perceived to be dependent on mentioned variables. In the first place, as far as people who utilize the most recent innovation like augmented reality, people may dodge the most recent innovation because they are not used to it (Oh *et al.* 2014). Besides, augmented reality is an innovation with vigorous visual improvements qualities (Cranmer, tom Dieck, and Fountoulaki 2020), individuals can't use it if they are not attracted toward the visual (Prideaux, Laws, and Faulkner 2003).

Furthermore, Oh *et al.* (2007) explored the stylish component of involvement represented the most fluctuation in the model anticipating. The outcome shows that the stylish experience impacts the traveler's excitement, memory, and fulfillment about the travel industry experience. Accordingly, the visual allure of innovation is a significant forerunner of the utilization of innovation. Seen visual allure is another build characterized in the literature as to how a tourist feels that the site is tastefully satisfying to the eye (Prideaux, Laws, and Faulkner 2003). Since the augmented reality is a representation procedure that blends different media data with a genuine view, the visual allure is liable to build impact on the utilization of augmented reality.

Consequently, a visual allure is an essential determinant of guests' convictions and perspectives. At last, if travelers have gadgets to use the augmented reality innovation they can use easily the augmented reality applications in their mobiles, or helped with using the augmented reality along with lines that support its utilization (Chen *et al.* 2014). Subsequently, to encourage full utilization of AR in a travel industry setting, this examination means to think about the utilization of augmented reality and its consequences for the expectation to visit the destination. Based on the discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed.

**H2:** Ease of using visual tourism has a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site.



Neidhardt & Werthner (2018) describe the e-tourism field as incorporating the “examination, plan, execution and use of IT/internet business arrangements in the movement and the travel industry, just as the examination (of the effect) of the individual specialized/monetary cycles and market structures”. This definition portrays the current examination streams inside the field, particularly inside the information innovation and tourism diary (Y. Wang and Davidson 2010).

In the first, the idea of IT addresses a specific instrumental perspective on innovation as an apparatus that helps organizations. Second, it stresses miniature and meso-level viewpoints while overlooking large-scale level inquiries in regards to the frameworks and administration moves toward that advance, encourage and direct specific sorts of innovations. However, it effectively has been scrutinized by Gretzel *et al.* (2015), who underlines the need to examine e-tourism among all five known tiers, from people to government/strategy issues, like morals and manageability. Third, this definition of e-tourism features that e-tourism research so far has been firmly established in a traditional as opposed to a post-advanced, humanist worldview. Individuals are defined and concentrated as consumers, clients, or information sources instead of affective individuals implanted and typified in physical and virtual networks and places. Like the organizations that give and use advances, they are regularly conceptualized as beneficiaries of technological ‘solutions’ and, along these lines, willing to be members in e-tourism. Innovation as such is viewed as guaranteed or something that ought to be improved instead of addressed.

E-tourism as a subject of the scientific request is a dynamic field that has infiltrated standard travel industry research and is proceeding to consider software engineering and designing researchers looking for application regions. In any case, the latest review papers confirmed that while the specific advances concentrated continually evolve, the research streams inside e-tourism have remained strikingly steady (Law *et al.* 2019; Gretzel *et al.* 2020). What can be seen throughout e-tourism research improvement is the development of center territories and exploration movement groups that compare to technological advances, similar to Web 2.0, large information, computer-generated reality, and brilliant innovations (Buhalis 2019). Normally, Covid-19 related innovation improvement and execution will spike comparable barges in e-tourism research.

From various perspectives, e-tourism research has not been affected by the emergency. While actual the travel industry has arrived at a stop, previous and potential travelers have been occupied with ruminating about past stumbles via online media by sharing excursion recollections and dreaming about the future path on objective or travel service sites. Historical centers have opened virtual ways to their presentations and exhausted would-be sightseers stuck in isolation are flocking to these and other

virtual encounters. Frustrated vacationers abandoned on trips or at home have been utilizing sites and versatile applications to drop the excursions and submit questions. Occupants talk about whether they are charmed or crushed about the vanishing of sightseers from their networks and pictures of the positive effects on nature of the unexpected vanishing of vacationers from an area of interest like Venice became famous online.

Airbnb has now offered virtual encounters, web-based media venture out influencers keep on creating substance for their crowds, and the travel industry suppliers utilize a huge number of online channels to keep up client connections and console future vacationers. Simultaneously, the travel industry suppliers and their exchange affiliations are taking part in online activism to uncover their reliance on worldwide online stages. These intensified or innovative use situations make a plentitude of information for e-tourism research. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

**H3:** E-tourism has a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site.

**H4:** E-tourism has a mediating role between the usefulness of visual tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site.

**H5:** E-tourism has a mediating role between ease of using visual tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site.

### *Technology Acceptance Model*

Normally, different investigations have been broadly directed by applying a TAM identified with clients' acknowledgment of IT (Cheng and Cho 2011; Su and Teo 2009; Lim and Cooper 2009; Kim, Lee, and Law 2008; Chung *et al.* 2015). The TAM clarifies individuals' acknowledgment of innovation established in the principle of contemplated activity (TRA) (Davis 1989). However, the TAM recommends two significant beliefs: the usefulness of visual tourism and the ease of using visual tourism and empowers these beliefs to shape singular perspectives, including the behavior to build aim to utilize the innovation and cause behavior (Davis 1989). Along with this, the Technology Acceptance Model is assessed as a predominant model as far as compactness and consistency in numerous fields. Specifically, the TAM recognizes different outer factors (e.g., foundational, individual, situational, social attributes, etc.) as an element influencing the two beliefs in numerous current examinations (such as, tendency to visit the actual tourism site (Phatthana and Mat 2011; Matikiti, Mpinganjira, and Roberts-Lombard 2018; Go, Kang, and Suh 2020; Goh and Wen 2020). The motivation behind this exploration is to depict acknowledgment of another innovation, for example, the tendency to visit the actual tourism site and visiting aim for guests who use visual

tourism as a legacy objective. Accordingly, this examination expects to clarify guests' acknowledgment of visual tourism dependent on the TAM. Besides, as expressed over, the examination recognizes the individual (TR), improvement (visual allure), and situational (working with conditions) perspectives influencing the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. Subsequently, this investigation thinks about TR, visual allure, and working with conditions as key variables impacting guests' beliefs, perspectives, utilization goal with AR, and an objective visit aim dependent on the TAM.

### *Technology Readiness and Acceptance Model*

As a new technology, for example, e-tourism influences not exclusively customers' practices yet additionally society overall. Since new technology is very revolutionary (Garcia and Calantone 2002), those unfit to find new technology are awkward and are not set up to effectively use it. At last, they attempt to keep away from new technology (Lin and Hsieh 2007).

Regarding the essentialness of new technology, customers' mentality, i.e., regardless of whether they acknowledge new advances, is developing revenue to the travel industry associations and objective showcasing associations (DMOs) using new technology. Consequently, different investigations endeavored to comprehend customers' innovation preparation (TR) and successfully foresee customers' practices (Parasuraman 2000).

TR is "individuals inclination to embrace and utilize new advancements for achieving objectives in home life and at work" (Parasuraman 2000). This development also alludes to a general perspective on mental empowering influences and inhibitors as determinants of an innovation client's inclination. Parasuraman (2000) created good faith, imaginativeness, uneasiness, and frailty as measurements in estimating individuals' general convictions about innovation (i.e., TR). These measurements influence the utilization of another innovation. People with undeniable degrees of idealism have a receptive outlook to the innovation furthermore, are bound to acknowledge it (Walczuch, Lemmink, and Streukens 2007). Individuals who favor advancement demonstrate an inclination to be early adopters and just to consider another innovation (Karahanna, Straub, and Chervany 1999). Be that as it may, individuals who are awkward concerning innovation tend to feel it is as well muddled, prompting a lower level of utilization (Walczuch *et al.* 2007). Moreover, individuals with a high score on uncertainty have a natural dread about innovation and try not to utilize an innovation (Kwon and Chidambaram 2000). So, idealism and ingenuity empower influences the use of new technology, though uncertainty and inconvenience (Parasuraman 2000). Individuals have positive and negative insights about innovation; the overall belief continuum for innovation went from an unequivocally sure to an emphatically negative demeanor toward the innovation (Lin, Shih, and Sher 2007).

A few scholastic examinations have inspected this belief continuum dependent on the elements of TR proposed by (Parasuraman 2000). For now, the combination of TR (Technology Readiness) and TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is the Technology Readiness and Acceptance Model (TRAM). This model is integrated to enlighten the intention of consumers well to use e-services. Previously, studies examine that TR is only implemented on online behaviors and online services quality, but these empirical researches have not been sufficient and consistent (Chiu and Cho 2020). For now, the TAM was intended to clarify the behavior of technology acceptance in a required situation. Consequently, the TAM is hard to use to clarify customers' technology acceptance whether they are co-producers or high-inclusion clients (Lin *et al.* 2007).

Later, introduced the extension of TAM to TR based on individual differences to personal differences (Lin *et al.* 2007). However, they developed the TRAM, an extensive framework with a combination of TAM and TR, to better understand the adoption of e-services for consumers. Grounded on prior experiences and knowledge of consumers related to technology could affect the consumer's perception and behavior toward new technology (Lin *et al.* 2007). So, TR is the opinion of general technology, and TAM is the conviction for a specific system (Lin *et al.* 2007). Therefore, this is a reason the number of studies examined the TRAM (Lin and Chang, 2011; Lin *et al.* 2007; Oh *et al.* 2014).

For example, Lin *et al.* (2007) developed the TRAM in Taiwan's online stock trading system and empirically tested it. Further, the study was conducted on the adoption of self-service technologies (Lin and Chang 2011). In addition, they investigated the actual use of the website using the TRAM in Thailand (Oh *et al.* 2014).

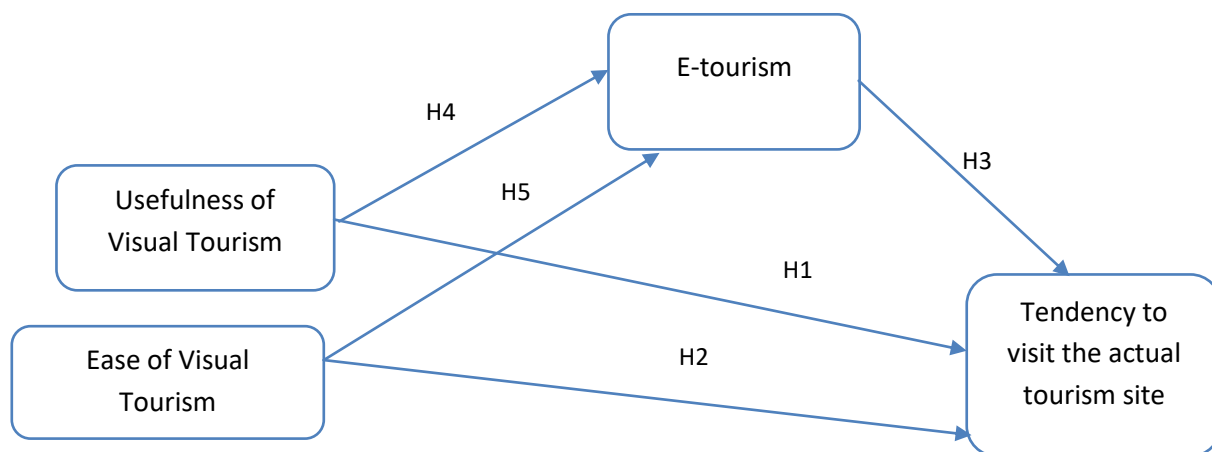


Figure 1: Conceptual Model (Source: Authors' depiction)

## METHODOLOGY

The study presents a quantitative methodology. As per the study, Creswell (2014) demonstrated that the quantitative method is a methodology that has its philosophical suppositions just as techniques for request. This study adopted the positivism philosophy with the use of the quantitative method. The data was collected from existing and potential tourists of Thailand. The study picks an appropriate sample size for the investigation (Bell and Bryman 2007). The study selected the non-probability testing strategy, permitting a simple method of choosing more respondents to be chosen within the shortest conceivable time (Birks and Malhotra 2006).

The study has chosen purposive sampling and the investigation members' were selected based on the measures or motivation of the examination. In this study measurement scale of variables is adopted by (Goodall 1988; Murphy 2013; Chung, Han, and Joun 2015). The questionnaires were distributed to the 500 tourists and the study received 319 questionnaires back. A total of 289 usable questionnaires were further processed after the deletion of incomplete questionnaires and outliers.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this study Partial least squared structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used for data analysis. The PLS-SEM is appropriate software to handle the non-normal and complex data (Hair *et al.* 2017). In this study, the PLS-SEM was carried out by running the PLS algorithm, bootstrapping technique, and blindfolding (Ringle, Da Silva, and Bido 2015).

Table 1 shows that the demographics. In gender section female are 35.2% and male are 64.8% in section of Age have Below 20 are 24.1%, 20–29 is 46.2%, 30–39 is 15.9%, 40–49 is 11%, above 50 is 2.8%. In the marital status section, married are 23%, Single is 77 %. In the education section, middle and high school are 25.5%, college students are 31.0% and university-educated students are 32.4%, and graduate school is 11%. In the occupation section, students are 60%, office workers are 13.8%, services are 2.1%, technicians are 2.1%, professionals are 8.3%, civil servants are 5.5%, homemakers are 5.5%, others are 2.8%.

Table 2 shows that the evaluation of design reliability and robustness is based on the design used in the model. Cronbach's alpha value is greater than 0.6, indicating that the data is reliable and higher than the initial value. It means that the values of  $\rho_A$  and CR are greater than 0.70, the value of AVE is greater than 0.50, and there are no data reliability issues, and the usability is accurate and in range (Hair Jr *et al.* 2016).

Table 3 above shows the validity differences, including two methods used to calculate the discriminative validity, the Fornell and Larcker criteria, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio analysis.

The HTMT values are a more reliable method to calculate the discriminant validity. It should be less than 0.85. This study indicates all values are less than 0.85 (Hair *et al.* 2019).

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents (Source: Authors' depiction)

Characteristics		Percentage%
Gender	Male	35.2
	Female	64.8
Age	Below 20	24.1
	20–29	46.2
	30–39	15.9
	40–49	11
	Above 50	2.8
Occupation	Student	60
	Professional	8.3
	Others	2.8
Education	Diploma	25.5
	Bachelor	31
	Masters	32.4
	other	11
Total		100.0

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity (Source: Authors' depiction)

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
E-Tourism	0.914	0.918	0.936	0.745
Ease	0.902	0.905	0.927	0.719
Tendency	0.835	0.867	0.875	0.543
Useful	0.763	0.807	0.840	0.521

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (Source: Authors' depiction)

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	E-Tourism	Ease	Tendency	Useful
E-Tourism				
Ease	0.820			
Tendency	0.748	0.732		
Useful	0.803	0.812	0.787	

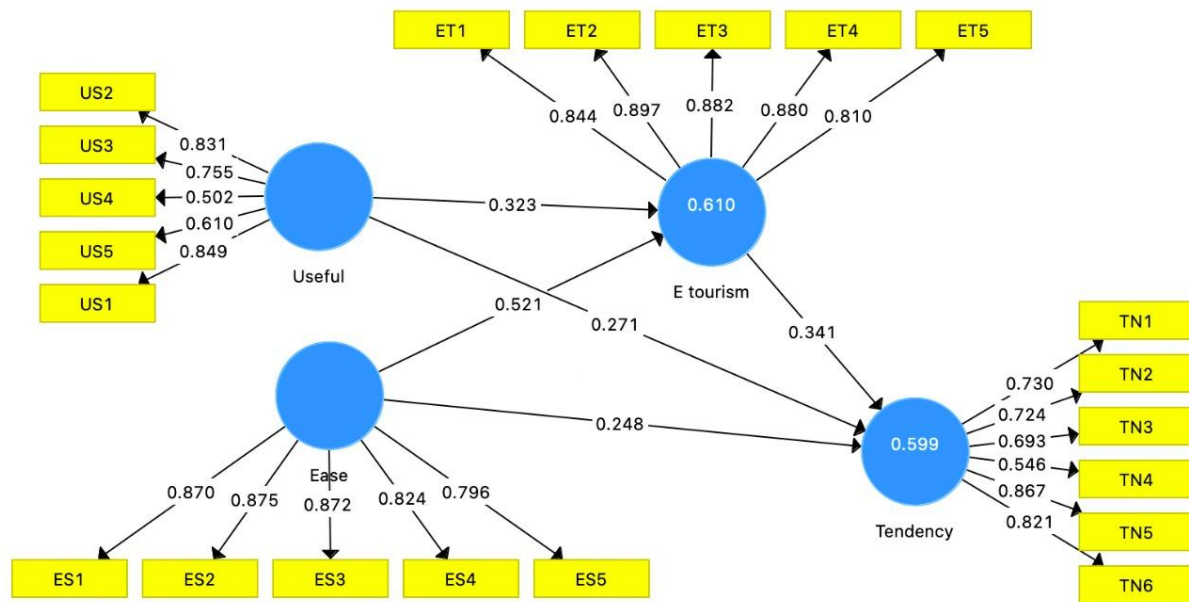


Figure 2: Structural Equation Model (Source: Authors' depiction)

Table 4: Direct Effect and Indirect Effect (Source: Authors' depiction)

No	Hypotheses	Beta Value	St. Dev	t-values	p-values	Results
H1	Useful-> Tendency	0.271	0.271	4.273	0.000	Supported
H2	Ease-> Tendency	0.248	0.079	3.131	0.002	Supported
H3	E-Tourism -> Tendency	0.341	0.072	4.727	0.000	Supported
H4	Useful -> E-Tourism -> Tendency	0.521	0.059	5.476	0.000	Supported
H5	Ease -> E-Tourism -> Tendency	0.323	0.057	9.078	0.000	Supported

Hypotheses testing is mentioned in table 4 for direct relationships and mediating effects. From the hypotheses testing, the value of direct effect between Useful of the visual tourism and tendency to visit the actual tourism site (Beta = 0.2392,  $t = 4.273$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), the relative different effect of values observed by the beta value and p-value. Therefore, the direct relationship between Useful of the visual tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site is strongly supported (H1). The findings of this study are supported to the usefulness of visual tourism have a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site which discussed earlier literature (Yovcheva, Buhalis, and Gatzidis 2013; Casella and Coelho 2013). The direct effect between ease of using the visual tourism and tendency to visit the actual tourism site (Beta = 0.248,  $t = 3.131$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), the results of the study is the direct relationship between ease of using the visual tourism and tendency to visit the actual tourism site is strongly supported (H2)



supported (Oh *et al.* 2014). The value of the direct relationship between e-tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site (Beta = 0.341,  $t = 4.727$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The study results show that e-tourism has a positive effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site Hypothesis (H3) is strongly supported (Neidhardt and Werthner, 2018).

Moreover, the indirect effect of the use of visual tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site by mediating the e-tourism shows the (Beta = 0.521,  $t = 5.476$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The results show that e-tourism has a mediating role between the usefulness of the visual tourism and tendency to visit the actual tourism site (H5) is strongly supported (Gretzel *et al.* 2015). Similarly, the indirect effect of ease of using the visual tourism ease and tendency to visit the actual tourism site by mediating the e-tourism shows the (Beta = 0.323,  $t = 9.078$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The results show that e-tourism has a mediating role between ease of using visual tourism and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site (H5) is supported (Buhalis 2019).

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The result of this study describes the importance of e-tourism. The previous studies investigated the phenomenon from an empirical perspective which focused on the impact of the usefulness of visual tourism and the ease of using visual tourism to visit the actual tourism site, e-tourism, mobile devices, mapping. However, the study proposed few possibilities for e-tourism which are not extensively investigated. After that, this study explains its empirical tendency to visit the actual tourism site. Initially, the assumptions in this study empirically support the idea that tourists' attitudes towards enhancing their intent to visit real tourism sites. In the field of tourism, it is crucial to introduce advanced technologies to mitigate the effects of Covid-19. In addition, current research contributes by analysis of e-tourism usage by tourists and their intentions to visit actual sites, assessing three dimensions: individual (TR), motivation (visual appeal), and situational factors (conditions of the action) in Thailand's perspective.

The study also highlighted the use of augmented reality and urges tourists to use it. The augmented reality should be in harmony with the real environment that meets normal purposes and conditions of use. According to the organization, the technical infrastructure will increase technology usage in the tourist of Thailand as well as other countries globally. According to TRAM and the elements of the usefulness of visual tourism and ease of using visual tourism are discussed in most IT departments. The study proves that these elements are important for using e-tourism thinking and visiting actual sites. This study provides some practical guidance on the tourism industry; first, the results show that usefulness of the visual tourism has a significant effect on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. The travelers using e-tourism should be willing to use this new technology to analyze the benefits of the tourist experience.

Therefore, to increase the supply of advanced general technology such as AR, tour operators, DMOs, tourism companies' tourists, and marketers should try the promotion or valance people on using advanced technology in tourism.

Second, this study highlights the importance of influence visual appeal for ease-of-use and the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. In short, the results show that vision is important for e-tourism. Therefore, the design should be made visible. The attractiveness of the augmented reality corresponds to tourist attractions. In addition, if the conditions of the installation are convenient to use, the conditions of adaptation have been strengthened. To make it easier for people to use new technologies, participants must create favorable conditions as a technology.

Third, e-tourism also affects the tendency to visit the actual tourism site. Most importantly, the action plan seems to have positive influences. Also, with a list of good intentions to use the augmented reality of current tourism. To use the most e-tourism and create the right perspective for e-tourism is extremely important; others believe that RA should influence behavior. Therefore, to support the foundation usefulness of the visual tourism, ease of using the visual tourism e- tourism, visit the actual tourism site tourism developers and retailers should strive to find users' survey tests are required before the technology is set up.

## CONCLUSION

A smart tourism provider develops e-tourism, and the attraction cup will be displayed to becoming a new tourism industry. Anyway, it's difficult for the customers to catch up on making good use of new technology. This study focused on e-tourism users, stimulus and related factors, and the visitor's destination heading to the monument attitude of e-tourism with ease of use. As a result, TR, visual appeal, is the current research; promotional conditions had a major impact on intent Visit actual sites through beliefs that use e-tourism attitude and intention to use e-tourism, intention to visit the actual site. Despite the contributions of current research, there are few limitations. First, the results are unique to actual sites. It cannot be generalized to or other actual sites or tourist destinations. Moreover, this example cannot represent the total population of e-tourism tourists. So future studies should focus on the various e-tourism users' tourist boards. Second, although this study is focused on the general understanding of the use of e-tourism and related purposes, visited the actual site and incomplete completion of this study accounting factors related to actual sites or incentives for tourists on heritage sites. The use of e-tourism in actual tourism is better understood when there are other factors such as the usefulness of visual tourism, ease of using the visual tourism e-tourism, tendency to visit the actual tourism site. Therefore, future research on the purpose and the impact of e-tourism on the tendency to visit the actual tourism site tourists experience heritage tourism. 🌐

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